

January 1, 2008

# BROWN

FAMILY MISSION

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December was starting to look like a really relaxing and low-key month for us. The office would close the week before Christmas and stay closed through the New Year. We had grandiose plans of all the things we would do with the kids, trips to the Giraffe Center, National Park and Snake Center. Lots of time at home just relaxing without the usual running.

The first official week of the office being closed, we found ourselves running still. We were running to pay bills, get the mail, pick up packages and create some sort of Christmas magic for our kids. By the end of our first week of “rest,” we were more tired and ragged than ever.

But thankfully, Christmas arrived just in time! We attended a Christmas Eve and Christmas Day service at church and after that, we bunkered down to celebrate in a way we’ve never celebrated. This was our first holiday alone, no extended family or team mates. It was exactly what we needed right now. Low-key and unplanned. Relaxing and indulging in all our American snacks that had been sent to us. Lots of movies (who knew Star Wars would play so well in the Christmas season?) and no driving.



Elliott, Edison and Emily in our sunny backyard on Christmas Eve.

We’ve been enjoying our much needed family time. Two days after Christmas was the Kenyan elections that have now made the news worldwide. We’ve been receiving emails from family and friends all over the world checking on us and praying for Kenya. To all of you we are so grateful. We had been warned to be ready for possible election violence, but no one expected it to really happen and never to this extent. Jeff and I had heard the warning so many times that we were extra cautious, stocking up on necessary items and preparing to be at home for an extended period. But overall, it seems that the country is in a state of shock and mourning. We ask for you to continue to pray for this situation.

As an outsider (and an American), I find myself full of opinions, solutions and even finding multiple other problems that I feel I could solve, while I watch and listen to this saga unfold. But God has reminded me several times the past two weeks on who I serve. I don’t serve the president of any country. No earthly man or woman is my leader. I serve the King of the universe, the Creator of all things. His Word says in Romans 13:1, “*Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.*”

Our governments are not accidental or coincidental. I can cry out in dismay when my candidate loses or cheer and be smug when my favorite wins, but where does my allegiance lie? Am I serving this flawed man or am I serving the Author of the world? No matter who wins, as Christians our joy should come in light of who our God is and in His will. We should not relish in the defeat or victory of man-made government, but we should rejoice in the perfect rule of our King and Savior!



Please keep this in mind as you head into your election season. Who do you serve? We all have opinions and desires when it comes to government. Are you trusting in the will of God or the will of man? I've been guilty of trusting in man. I find myself doing it again and again. Those men are giving power and authority through God and that is where my trust, allegiance and service should be.

Now with almost everything in Nairobi at a halt, we've been forced to continue our rest. We have not had a Sabbath rest in forever and now He has given us many Sabbaths in a row for rest, reflection and fellowship as a family unit. It isn't how I imagined my free time to look like, but I'm trusting in God's timing for us and His provision for Kenya.

"Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of **great joy that will be for all the people**. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is **Christ the Lord**."

Luke 2:10,11 (emphasis added)

Peace,

Jeff and Tammi

Emily, Elliott and Edison

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#### Prayer and Praise Points

- For a peaceful end to the violence and looting in Nairobi
- Praise for God's protection and provision for our family and team
- Praise for our health and rest
- Prayer for Henry (a new Christian) as he deals with the responsibility of extended family
- Pray for the election results here in Kenya and the upcoming election in US
- Pray for us to grow closer to God, not just in a head knowledge but with transformed hearts and lives
- Prayer and Praise for our team in Kenya: the Crum Family, Ham Family, Cazier Family, Helen Tak, Morden Family, Lynn Pottenger and Barron Family. All have been a great extended "family" for us.